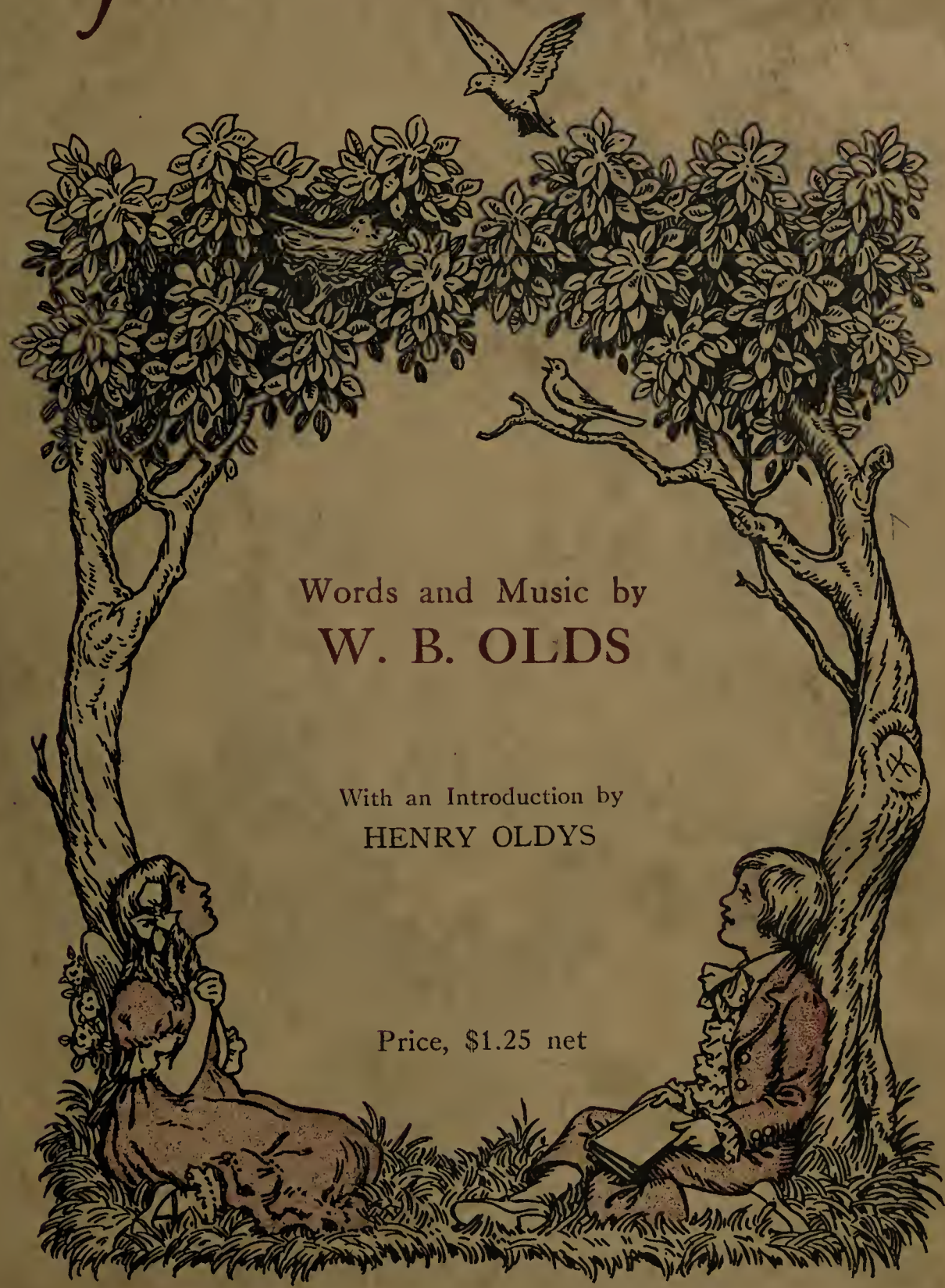
Twenty-Five Bird Songs *for Children*



Words and Music by

W. B. OLDS

With an Introduction by

HENRY OLDYS

Price, $1.25 net

G. SCHIRMER

LONDON · NEW YORK · BOSTON

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W. B. OLDS

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The illustrations are used by courtesy of
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"It was the warbling of the birds
which first gave man the thought of music."

CLAUDE DEBUSSY

INTRODUCTION

By HENRY OLDYS

The many bits of melody that fill the solitudes of nature offer a fascinating field of discovery to musicians, yet to nearly all this field remains a *terra incognita.* Poets have been attracted to the haunts of birds from the earliest days of poetry, but seldom does a musician cross the threshold of their courts. Yet musicians, above all others, can there find keen enjoyment and actual inspiration. Mr. Olds shows by the group of delightful little songs he has produced, each of which is based on one or more real bird themes, what possibilities of suggestion bird-song contains. And it must be remembered that the reservoir is inexhaustible; not only does each species have its own characteristic music, but within the specific limit there are often both geographic and individual differences, while frequently, as is now known, a single individual will have a varied repertory of songs. Then, too, among these humbler musicians, as among their human brothers, there are marked gradations of individual excellence. Performances ranging from mediocrity to mastership may be found among wood thrushes, robins, song sparrows, and many others. Like Gray's flower,

> "born to blush unseen
> And waste its sweetness on the desert air,"

many of the avian mastersingers pour out beautiful and unique fragments of melody which, unheard by comprehending humans, in a few years pass away forever with the life of the singer.

The success with which Mr. Olds has secured and set a few of these gems of avian music should inspire others of the musical world to undertake a similar quest and to preserve some of the masterpieces of bird-music that apathy and neglect are now allowing to go to waste. Those who combine philosophy with music will find constant interest in study of the evident and very close relationship between bird-music and human music. Not only is this relationship shown in the occasional coincidence of human and avian themes, but still more strikingly is it manifest in the identical rules of construction often governing rhythm, melody, and melodic and harmonic sequence in both. This fact so impressed my very good friend, Mrs. Amelia von Ende, the well-known musical and literary critic, that in a new course of lectures on the history of music, she has, as she recently informed me, ignored all precedent and started with bird-music as one of the sources.

For the information of any who may wish to become acquainted with the beauties of bird-music it may be stated that although spring and early summer are the best times for such study, yet there is no season in the year that is necessarily absolutely unproductive. The general chorus of bird-song begins before the winter has passed in February. It waxes as the number of singers is augmented by the arrival of summer residents and passing migrants, and then wanes until by August, when most species are moulting, it becomes a thread. In early autumn it revives in a somewhat desultory way and is finally extinguished by winter's inclemency. Yet even in the depth of winter, when the earth is fast in the bonds

of ice and snow, one may hear an occasional song from some intrepid and unconquerable spirit. In this, as in so many ways, the year somewhat parallels the day. Birds begin to sing before light and the chorus swells, declines, becomes desultory, revives toward sunset, and is at length extinguished by night, which, however, like winter, is marked by an occasional song. Regular nocturnal singers, like whip-poor-wills and owls, tend to destroy the parallel; but when out of the dark and silence of the night there rises a little lay from a field sparrow, wood pewee, or other bird that had gone to rest at nightfall, it is like hearing a bright song from chickadee, song sparrow, or Carolina wren in the midst of a gloomy and cheerless day of midwinter.

In closing I wish to express my high appreciation of the art and feeling Mr. Olds has exercised in the preparation of this little volume. While properly preserving with exactness the bird themes he embodies in his songs, he has combined them so ingeniously, has harmonized them so attractively, and has so well interpreted the sentiment that seems to underly each bird's utterances, that I feel they cannot fail to bring delight and profit to the many thousands I hope will make their acquaintance.

PREFACE

In writing this series of little songs, I have been dominated by a desire to accomplish two results. First, that the songs might prove to be such as would appeal to children, for the actual bird-melodies thus unconsciously absorbed should inevitably lead to a keener delight in the singing of birds, and a better understanding of their songs. A further result of this knowledge I hope will be the promotion of a deeper interest in the whole subject of bird-life, and the need of its preservation.

My second purpose is to interest musicians, particularly composers of children's songs, in the possibilities of utilizing bird themes. Here is a vast, untouched field, the resources of which are practically inexhaustible, for, since each individual of several species may have a large répertoire all its own, thousands of beautiful new melodies are to be heard every season. A brief study of the themes which I have used should demonstrate their practical value, and what could be of greater interest to a child than songs treating of bird-life, which contain the real melodies sung by the birds?

I have not made a particular point of keeping the melodies in the keys in which they were originally sung. Of greater importance, it seemed to me, was the preservation of the spirit of the original song, transposing, where necessary, to keys which would allow suitable range for the child-voice. The melodic intervals I have, of course, kept absolutely true.

Most of the themes which I have used are the results of my own observations. My thanks are due, however, and heartily given to Mr. Henry Oldys and Mr. F. Schuyler Mathews for permission to make use of themes from their records, and for valuable suggestions. Credit has been given in the proper places for themes thus used. The colored illustrations have been obtained through the National Association of Audubon Societies.

W. B. OLDS.

Decatur, Illinois.
January, 1914.

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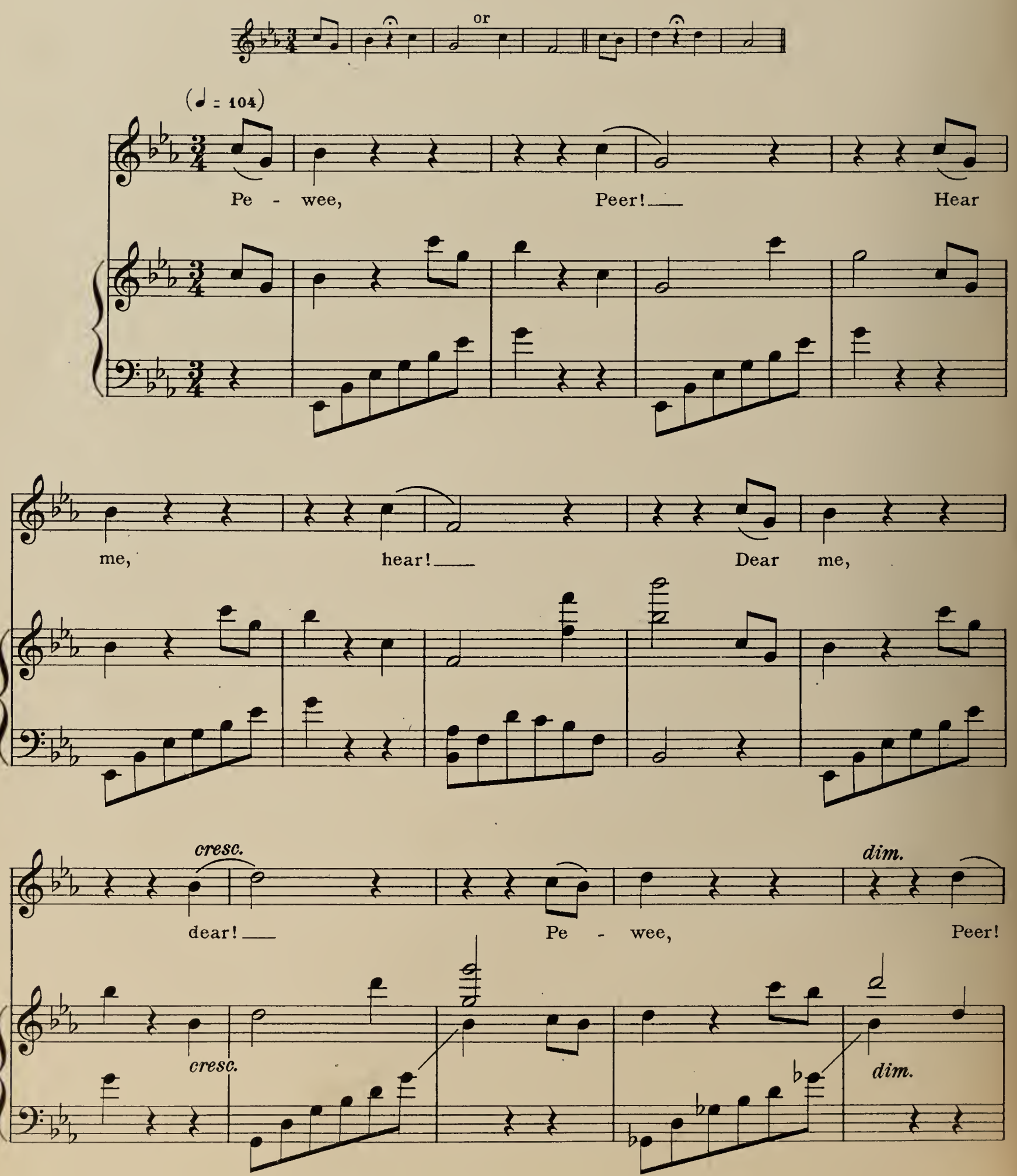
WOOD PEWEE

This song should be sung in a languid manner, with decided *portamento* where indicated. The words as given form a good imitation of the tone of the Pewee, though whistling, as suggested for the second part of the song, will prove more characteristic. In whistling, the first note of each group should be attacked slightly from below.

It is an interesting fact that of the twenty-four birds treated in this series, exactly one-third bear names which were evidently suggested by their calls or songs.

Wood Pewee



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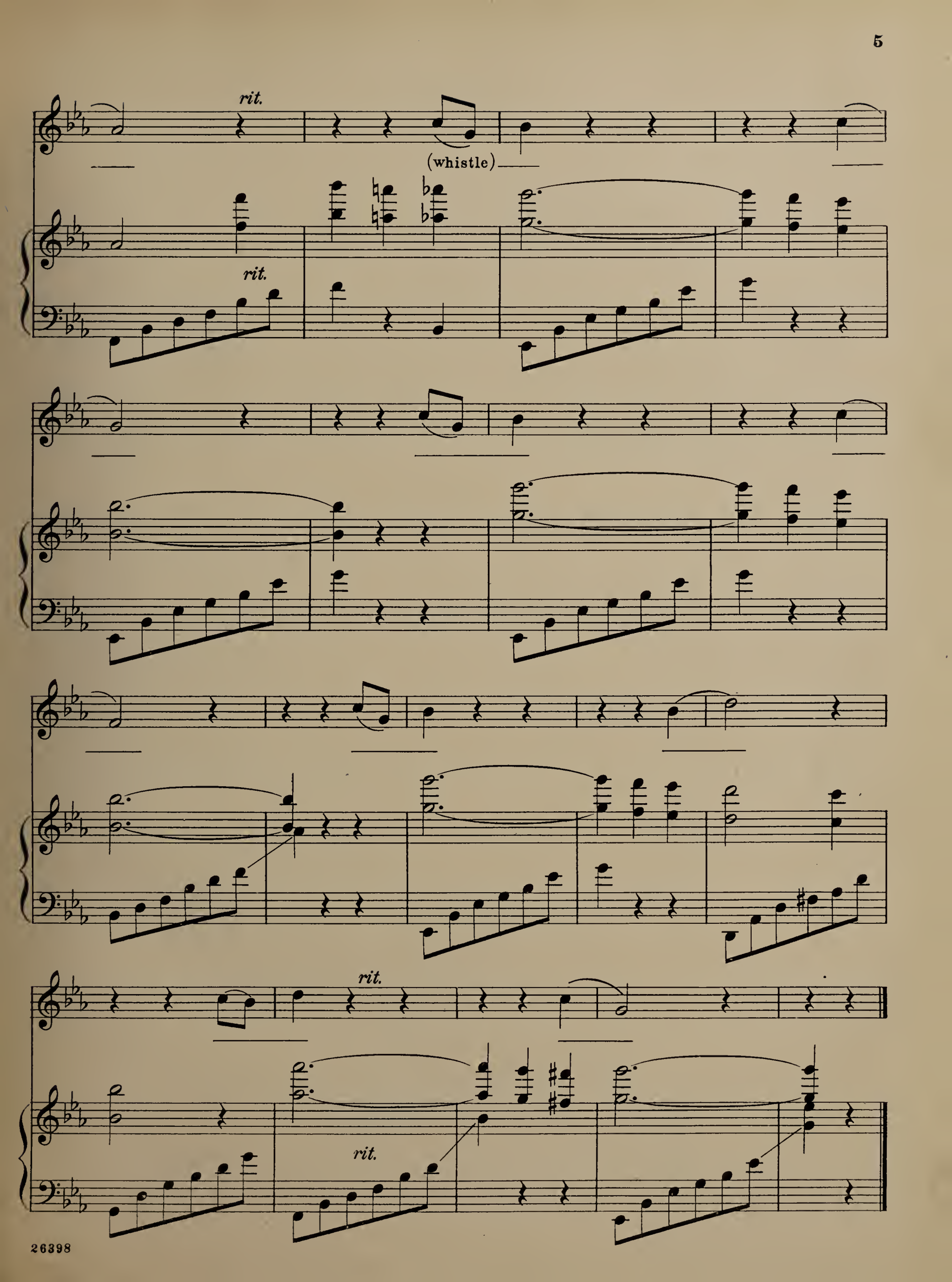

rit.
(whistle)
rit.
rit.
rit.

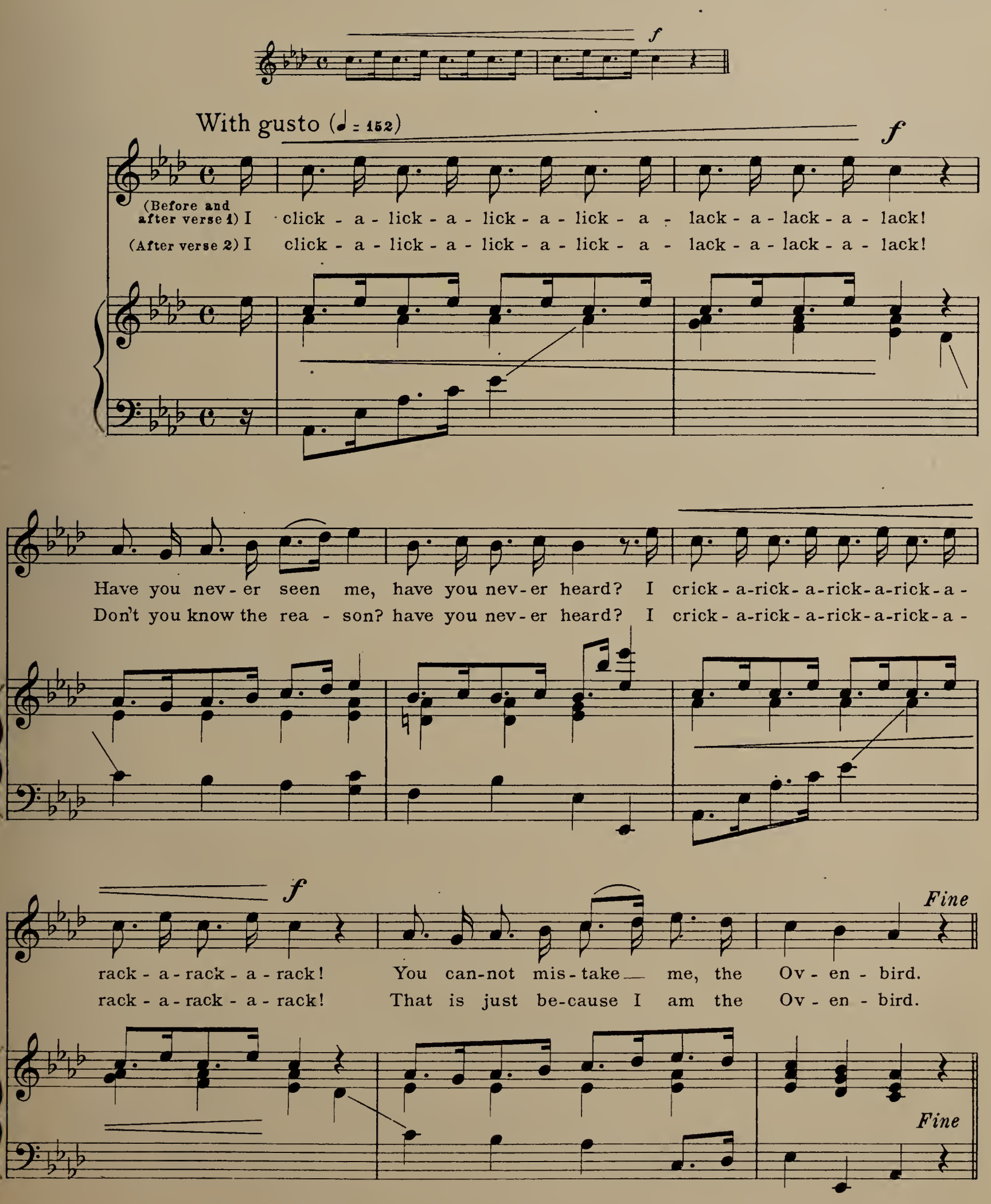
OVENBIRD

The syllables "click-a-lick," broadening as the tone increases in volume, to "lack-a-lack," seem to me to more nearly represent the sound of the Ovenbird's cry than does Mr. Burroughs' "teacher, teacher," etc. He undoubtedly does sometimes say "teacher"; in fact, I have heard him do so, but the birds which I have heard more commonly sing the other syllables, and as the material used in these songs is largely the result of my own personal observations, I have used the song which I have most frequently heard.

The reference in the song to the house "built upon the ground," with a roof, etc., is due to the peculiar circumstance that the bird does this very thing, entering his domicile from a hole in the side.

The cry of the bird should be sung with energy and precision.

Ovenbird


f
With gusto (♩ = 152)
f
(Before and after verse 1) I click - a - lick - a - lick - a - lick - a - lack - a - lack - a - lack!
(After verse 2) I click - a - lick - a - lick - a - lick - a - lack - a - lack - a - lack!
Have you nev - er seen me, have you nev - er heard? I crick - a-rick - a-rick-a-rick-a -
Don't you know the rea - son? have you nev - er heard? I crick - a-rick - a-rick-a-rick-a -
f
Fine
rack - a - rack - a - rack! You can-not mis - take me, the Ov - en - bird.
rack - a - rack - a - rack! That is just be-cause I am the Ov - en - bird.
Fine

1. "But why so loud - ly cry with such a mer - ry din?
2. "But tell me why you built your house up - on the ground?

Have you wrought so won-drous-ly? Then why not proud-ly fly to
Such a strange con - tri - vance! And did you build a roof for

take a look with - in? Do you fear a spy?"
fear you might be drowned? I should like to know."

D.C.

D.C.

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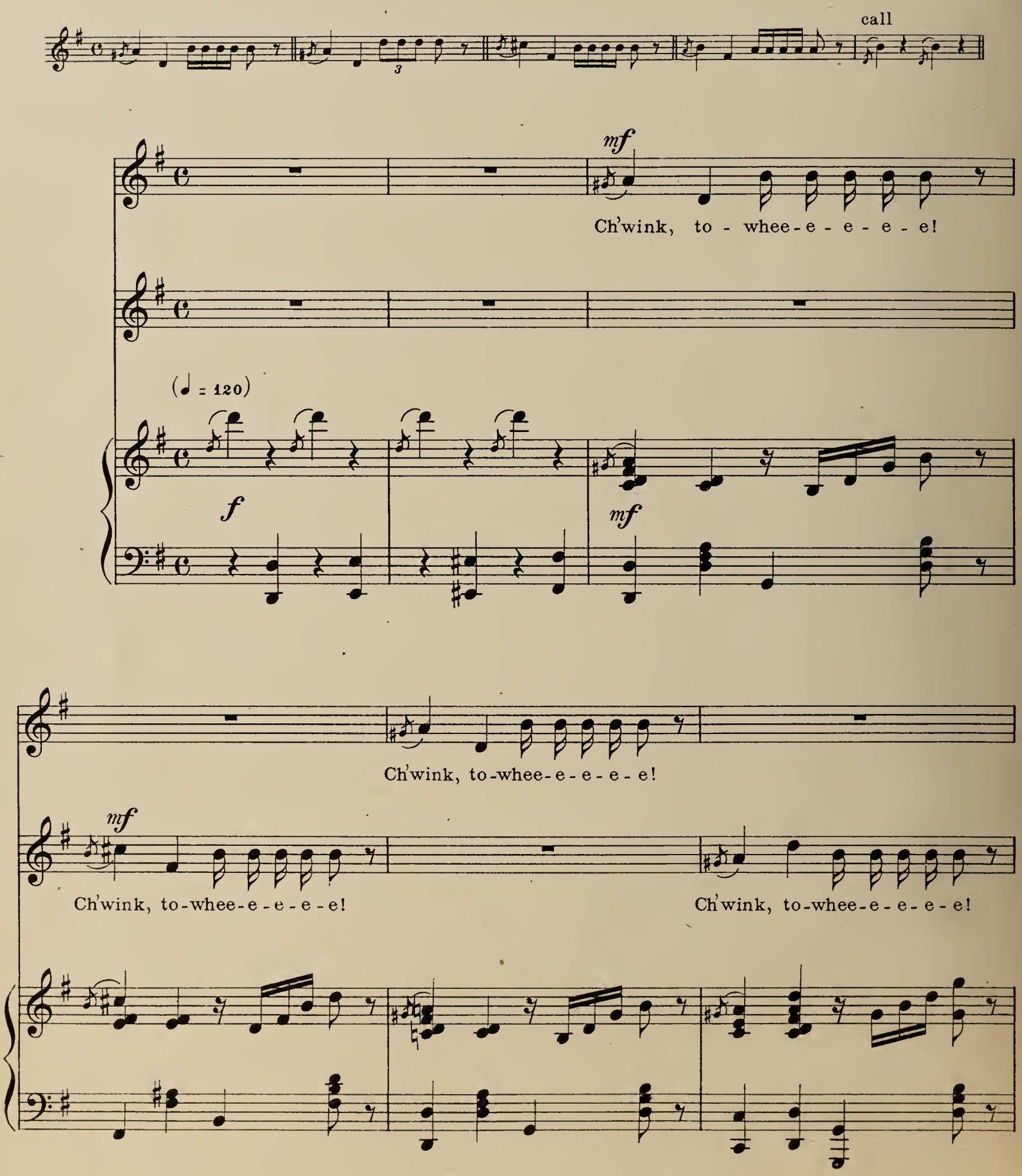
CHEWINK, OR TOWHEE

Some have seemed to think that the call of this bird is "Chewink!" and others interpreted the song as "Towhee!" though the latter word must originally have been accented on the last syllable rather than the first, to really represent the sound. "Chewink bird, he! he! he! he!" with the last four syllables given in a thin tone, seems to me more exactly imitative than the other phrase which I have used.

Chewinks are often heard answering each other from neighboring trees or bushes, and sometimes the responses are well related musically. Hence the form of the present song.

Chewink, or Towhee



f *mf*

Ch'wink! Ch'wink! Ch'wink bird, he! he! he! he!

f *mf*

Ch'wink! Ch'wink! Ch'wink bird, he! he! he! he!

f *mf*

mf

Ch'wink bird, he! he! he! he! *f* Ch'wink!

mf *f*

Ch'wink bird, he! he! he! he! Ch'wink!

f

Ch'wink! Ch'wink! Ch'wink bird, he! he! he! he!

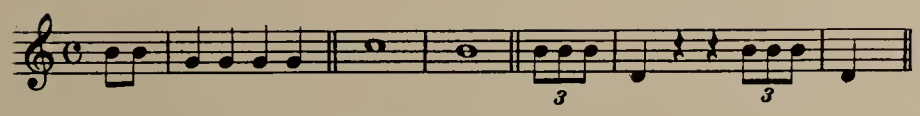
Ch'wink! Ch'wink! Ch'wink bird, he! he! he! he!

pp *e rit.*

BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE

Each of these three themes has its own distinctive tonal quality. The first, represented by the words "Chick-a-dee-dee-dee-dee," and the most commonly known of his calls, is given, as Mr. Mathews says, in a "rather squeaky," but nevertheless very cheery tone, for the Chickadee is a most social and confiding little bunch of feathers. The second theme is sung with very pure, clear tone, suggesting the word "Phœbe." The third is a sort of chatter, almost a scold, which I heard late in the summer, as a flock of Chickadees hopped through the low branches above my head. The syllables which most nearly represented this call were, as I put them in my note-book at the time: "Chick-a-dee-lup!" This phrase I have translated in the song as "Never give up!"

Black- capped Chickadee



Brightly (𝅗𝅥 = 96)

1. There's a jol - ly chap with a vel - vet cap Whom I al - ways love to see; And I love to hear his word of cheer, For he seems to speak to me:

2. When the morn - ing sun has just be - gun To peep o'er yon - der hill, From the hem - lock - tree he calls to me, Just be - yond my win - dow - sill:

legato

mf

"Phœ - - be, Phœ - - be, nev-er give up! nev-er give

"Phœ - - be, Phœ - - be, time to get up! time to get

mf

up! Chick-a - dee-dee-dee-dee - dee! Phœ - - be,

up! Chick-a - dee-dee-dee-dee - dee! Phœ - - be,

cresc.

mf

Phœ - - - be!" that is what he says to me, And so I

Phœ - - - be!" that is what he says to me, And so I

nev-er give up! nev-er give up! Chick-a - dee-dee-dee-dee - dee!

have to get up! have to get up! Chick-a - dee-dee-dee-dee - dee!

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MEADOWLARK

Because one had learned the melody of a Meadowlark from the printed notes would not necesarily mean that he could then sally forth and unerringly recognize a Meadowlark song when he heard it. The chances for so doing would be better with the melody in mind than before, but there is more in bird-music than mere pitch and rhythm. To really know a bird's song one must hear it sung by the bird; then he may be able to read into the given melody the proper tone-quality, style of delivery, etc. Moreover, one might never hear the melody in question, for different Meadowlarks sing different songs, and each bird may have several in his own répertoire.

The present song will be found most realistic if the second theme (contributed by Mr. Henry Oldys) is whistled, with perfect legato and good spirit. This will give one a fairly clear idea of the general effect of a Meadowlark's song as heard in the middle West, for the Meadowlarks of this section of the country sing with but little of the decided *portamento* which characterizes the song of the Eastern Meadowlarks.

Meadowlark

(♪ = 116)

Out where the flow - ers grow, Smil - ing in the morn - ing sun,

quite a little faster

Up where the breez-es blow, Fra-grant and sweet. "The but-ter-cups are blos-som-ing,

quite a little faster

The feath-er-folk are has-ten-ing." So from his ce-dar post

a tempo

rit.

a tempo

Sings the mer-ry Meadow-lark, Van - guard of summer's host, Spring-time to greet.

rit.

rit.

From * to * may be whistled, if preferred.

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BALTIMORE ORIOLE

The Baltimore Oriole sings rag-time! There is no disputing the fact that many of his songs are delivered with that marked syncopation of rhythm which in its degeneracy has deservedly come into disrepute with serious musicians. Yet we cannot condemn the Oriole for his love for misplaced accents, nor does the fact that syncopation is found in nature constitute an excuse for its abuse.

The transcribing of this song might have been omitted, for fear of offending some, but I believe that the effect of the song is true, and the truth we must have in a serious study of nature.

The themes which I have used were noted by Mr. Henry Oldys.

Baltimore Oriole

Gaily (𝅗𝅥 = 100)

mf

I'm the bright and gay O-ri-ole, Looking for my break-fast up in the tree;

mf

Worms and in-sects pay heav-y toll, Cat-er-pil-lars jui-cy taste good to me.

p

Mine's a sump-tuous bill of fare, Nev-er have I seen the lar-der low,

p

Meat a-plen-ty al-ways there, With a lit-tle fruit for sal-ad, you know.

f

I'm the bright and gay O - ri - ole, Look-ing for my break - fast up in the tree,

f

Worms and in - sects pay heav-y toll, Cat - er - pil - lars jui - cy taste good to me.

ritard.

a tempo

With vigor

f *mf*

Heigh-o, but life is jol-ly, High up in the tree-top sing-ing to you.

f *mf*

f *mf*

Sigh-ing is naught but fol-ly, I have al-ways some-thing bet-ter to do.

f *mf*

p

Winds are play - ing, Boughs are sway - ing, Buds are

p

rit. *f*

show - ing, Green things grow - ing, Heigh-o, but life is jol-ly,

rit. *f*

mf *f*

High up in the tree-top sing-ing to you. Sigh-ing is naught but fol-ly,

mf *f*

mf

I have always some-thing better to do.

mf

f *mf* *f*

I'm the bright and gay O-ri-ole, Look-ing for my break-fast up in the tree. Worms and insects

f *mf* *f*

mf *ritard.* *p*

pay heav-y toll, Cat-er-pillars jui-cy taste good to me, taste good to me, to me.

mf *ritard.* *p*

WOOD THRUSH

The Wood Thrush is without doubt one of our very finest singers. The intervals comprising his melodies are quite distinct and clean-cut. Each phrase has a decided tonality, and successive phrases, while differing from each other in form, are usually in the same key. As for his voice, what pen can do it justice? All of the bird-music lovers have exhausted their vocabularies in describing it, but to appreciate its wonderful, silvery tone and its peace-producing effect, one must hear it in the quiet of the deep woods.

The effect of the song as here given will be most natural if the melody is whistled throughout, with a roll of the tongue between tones.

Wood Thrush

Quietly (♩ = 76)

In the for- est deep and shad-wy Not a

sound is heard save a war- bling bird. And the

mes- sage that he sings me: "Be of good

cresc. *dim.*

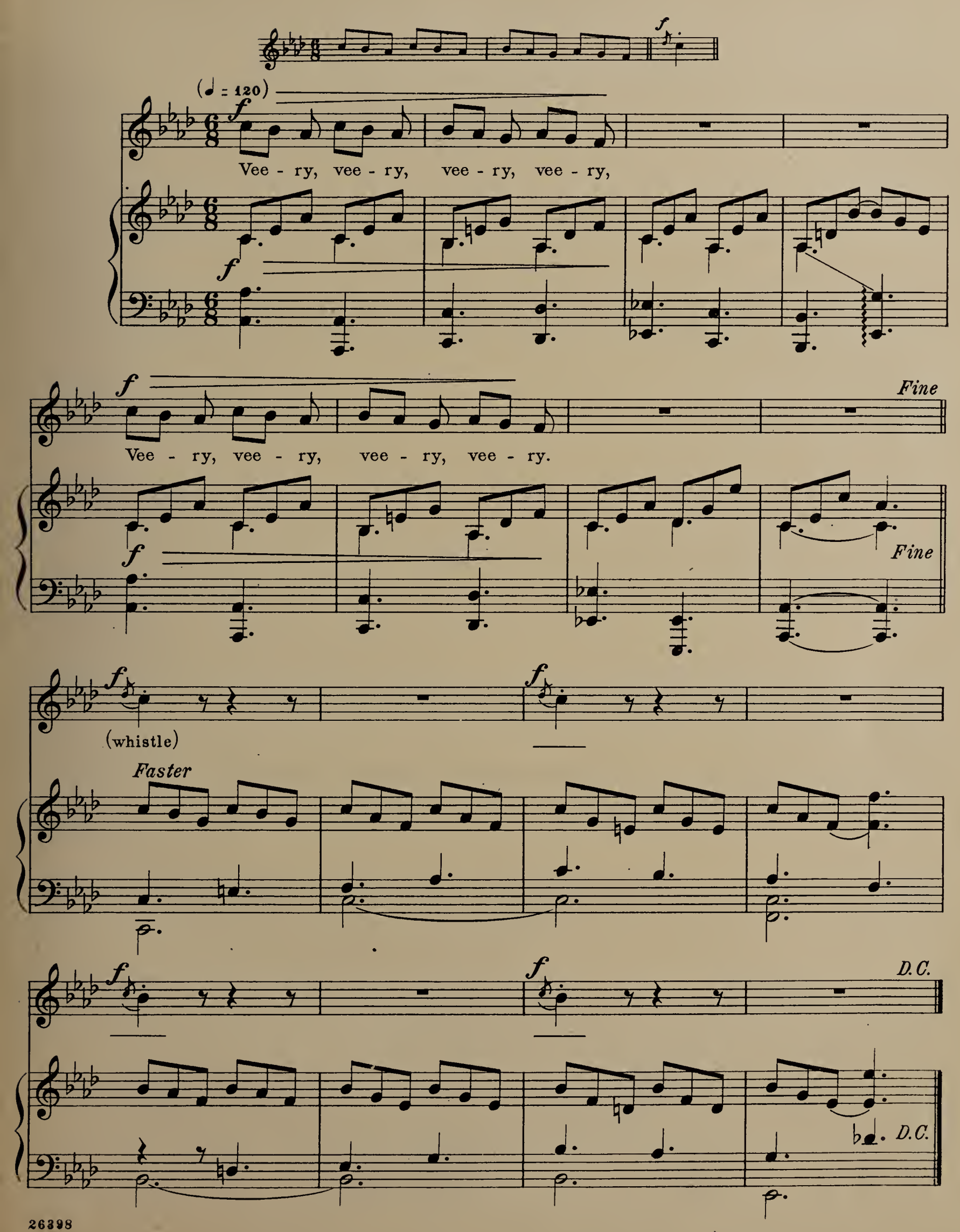
cheer! Nev-er a care en- ter- eth here!"

VEERY, OR WILSON THRUSH

One is filled with wonder and delight upon first hearing the song of this thrush. While not a versatile melodist like the Hermit or the Wood Thrush, yet he has the thrush voice, though with his own very decided timbre. The tone sounds much like that produced by a Jew's harp, and his song is quite accurately imitated by singing his name, "Veery, veery," etc.

To put his melody upon paper is a most difficult undertaking. His intervals are not clear and his song is usually but a series of descending slurs, each group lower in pitch and of less volume than the preceding. His call, in contrast, as I heard it, is a very sharp, staccato tone, approached by a grace-note from above.

Veery, or Wilson Thrush



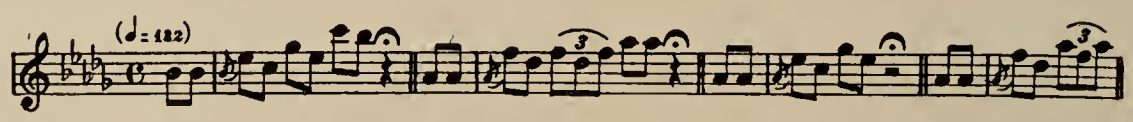
OLIVE-BACKED THRUSH

This thrush has the same beautiful, appealing tone-quality as the other members of his family. While his répertoire is limited, yet his melodies are most astounding, in that they consist almost entirely of a series of tones comprising a seventh-chord. Mr. Mathews has heard him singing diminished seventh-chords. I have secured but one record of this thrush, and that was a series of tones forming what is sometimes called the small seventh-chord, built upon the seventh degree of the major scale. So in the song I have used both forms.

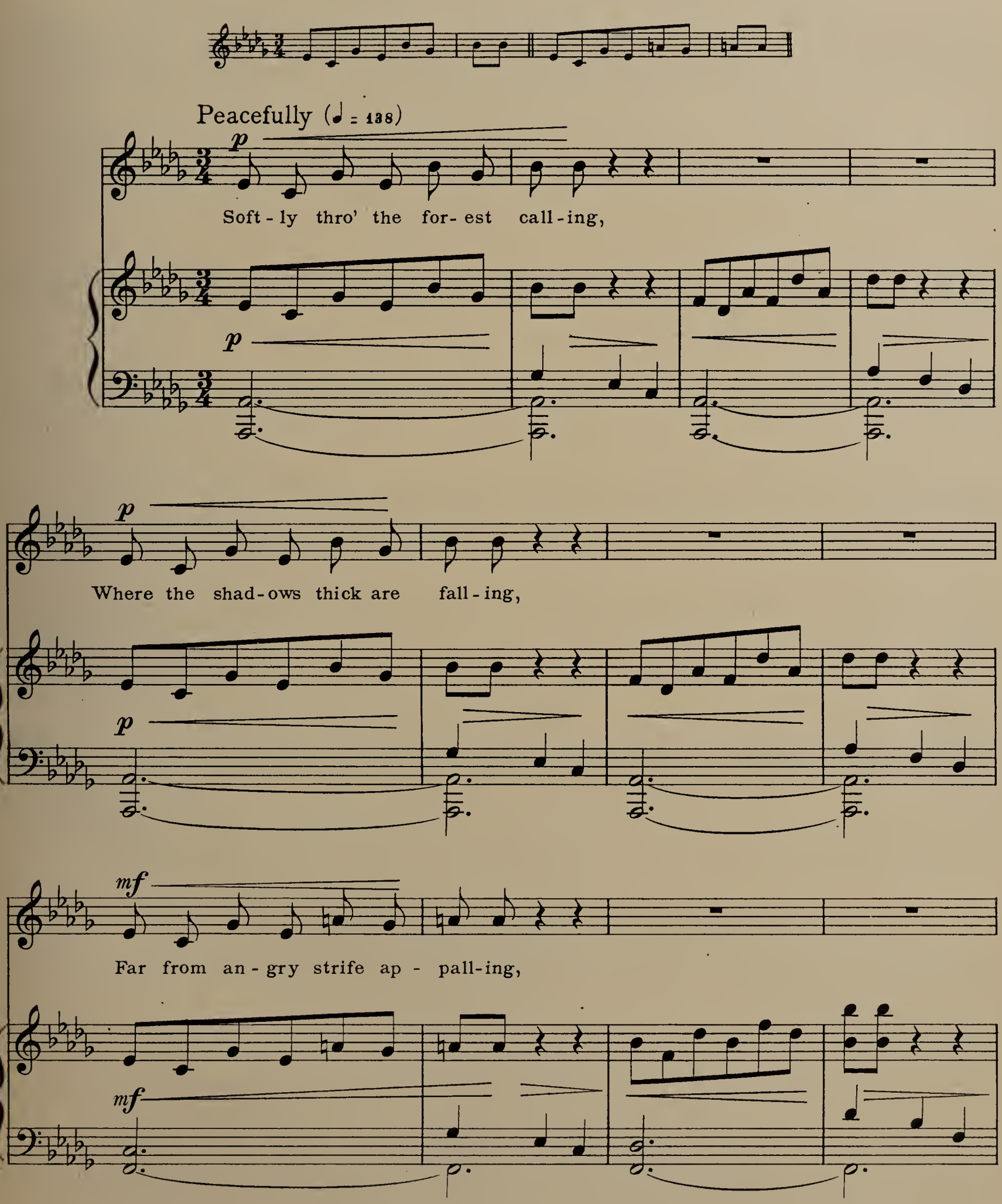
This melody will be more realistic if whistled.

After writing this song and the above sketch, and before sending the MS. to the publisher, I received from Mr. Oldys a remarkable record of this bird. It will be noted that in my song I have given to the piano a broken tonic chord as an answer to the bird's theme. In Mr. Oldys' record the bird itself actually sang the very tones which I, as my own invention, had given to the piano, and repeated the phrases, he tells me, from fifty to a hundred times, without varying their order. A further coincidence is that the songs were sung in the same key, I having simply transposed my theme an octave lower. Have birds a sense of tonality?

Here is Mr. Oldys' record:



Olive-backed Thrush



f *rit.*

Comes a sweet voice.

f *rit.*

a tempo *p*

As I lis - ten to the sing-ing,

a tempo *p*

p

Sil - v'ry tones so sweet - ly ring - ing,

mf

Ten - der thoughts to me are wing - ing,

mf

Mak - ing my heart re - joice.

Sing, lit - tle bird! Sing! tho' un -

heard! Sing!

Sing, lit - tle bird!

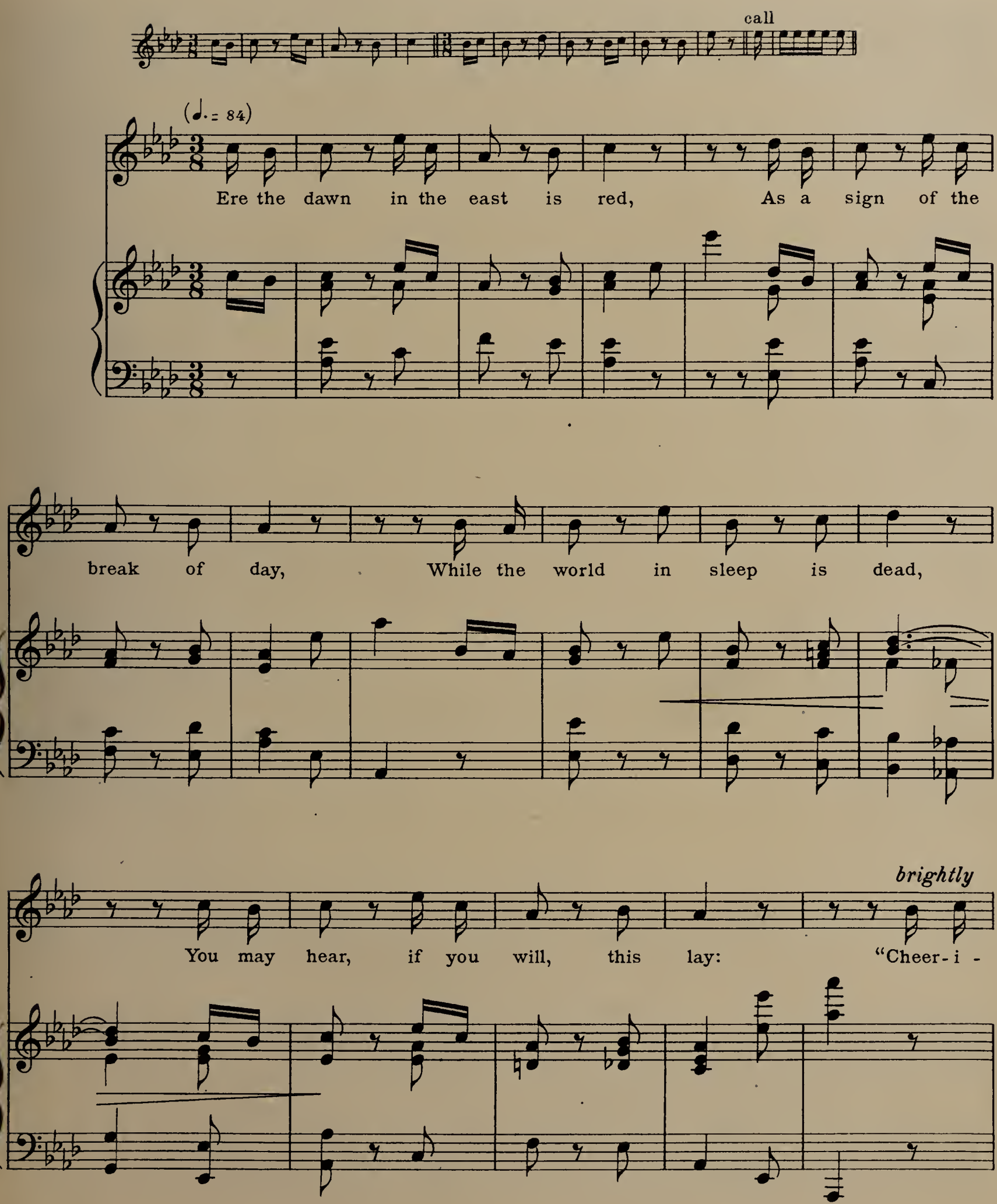
rit. *p*

ROBIN

The Robin is one of the first to greet the coming day, and one of the last to bid it farewell. His song consists of a series of groups of two or three notes, sometimes establishing a definite tonality, and sometimes being merely an incoherent, rambling discourse.

The first strain which I have used was noted by Mr. F. Schuyler Mathews, author of the "Field Book of Wild Birds and Their Music," who has kindly given me permission to employ it. That used in the refrain of the song, I heard exactly as it appears here, except that it was originally sung in the key of C.

Robin


call
(♩. = 84)
Ere the dawn in the east is red, As a sign of the
break of day, While the world in sleep is dead,
brightly
You may hear, if you will, this lay: "Cheer-i -

ly, cheer up, cheer-i - ly, cheer up, cheer-i - ly, cheer up, cheer

(whistle, if possible)

up! Cheer-i - ly, cheer up, cheer-i - ly, cheer up, cheer-i - ly, cheer

f

up, cheer up! Then a - gain, when the eve is near,

8

f

And the west with its glow is bright, You may hear his

note of cheer, As he sings to the world: Good - night.

"Cheer-i - ly, cheer up, cheer-i - ly, cheer up, cheer-i - ly, cheer

(whistle, if possible)

rit. e dim. al fine

up, cheer up! Cheer-i - ly, cheer up, cheer-i - ly, cheer

f

pp

up, cheer-i - ly, cheer up, cheer up!"

pp

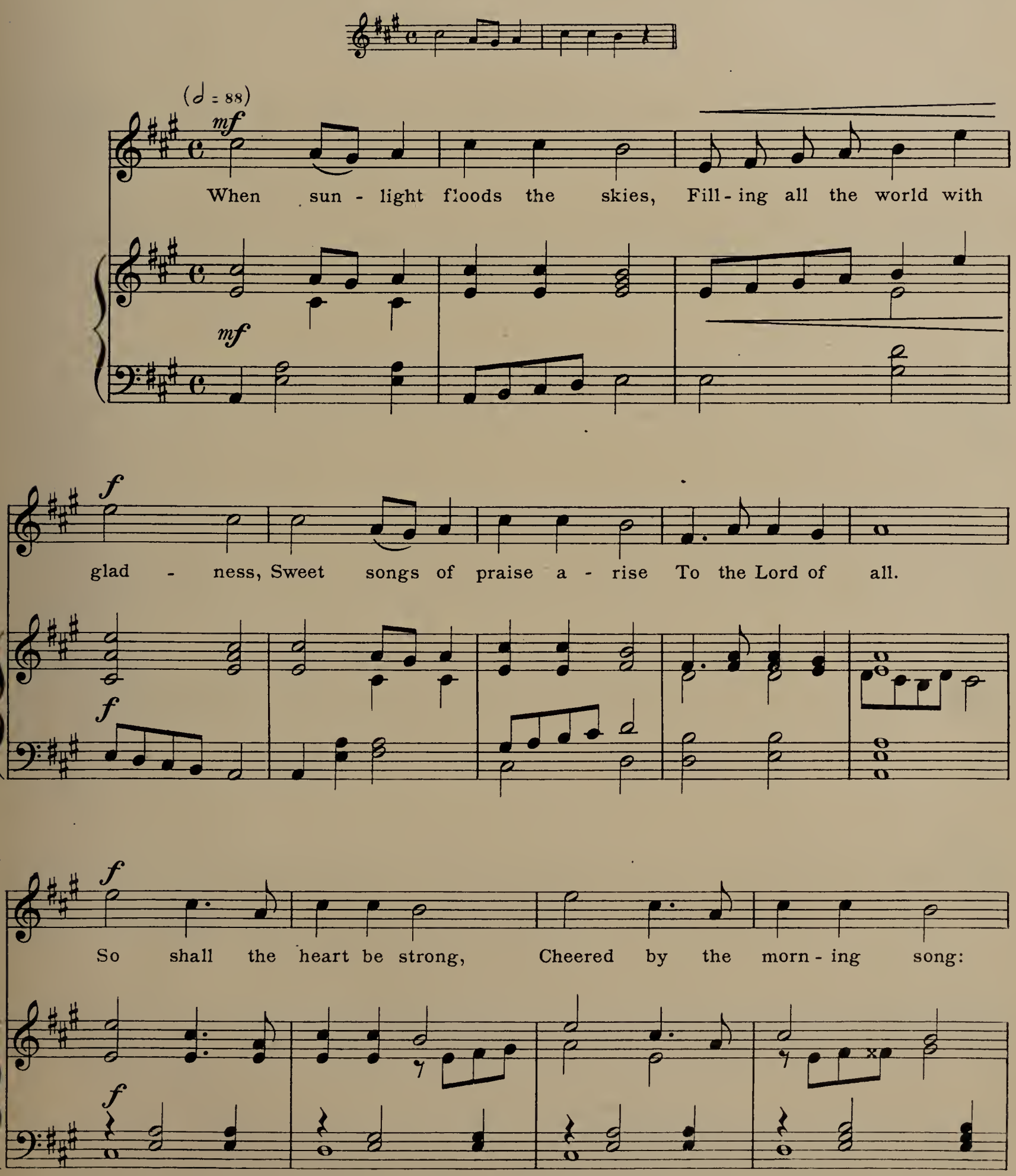
pp

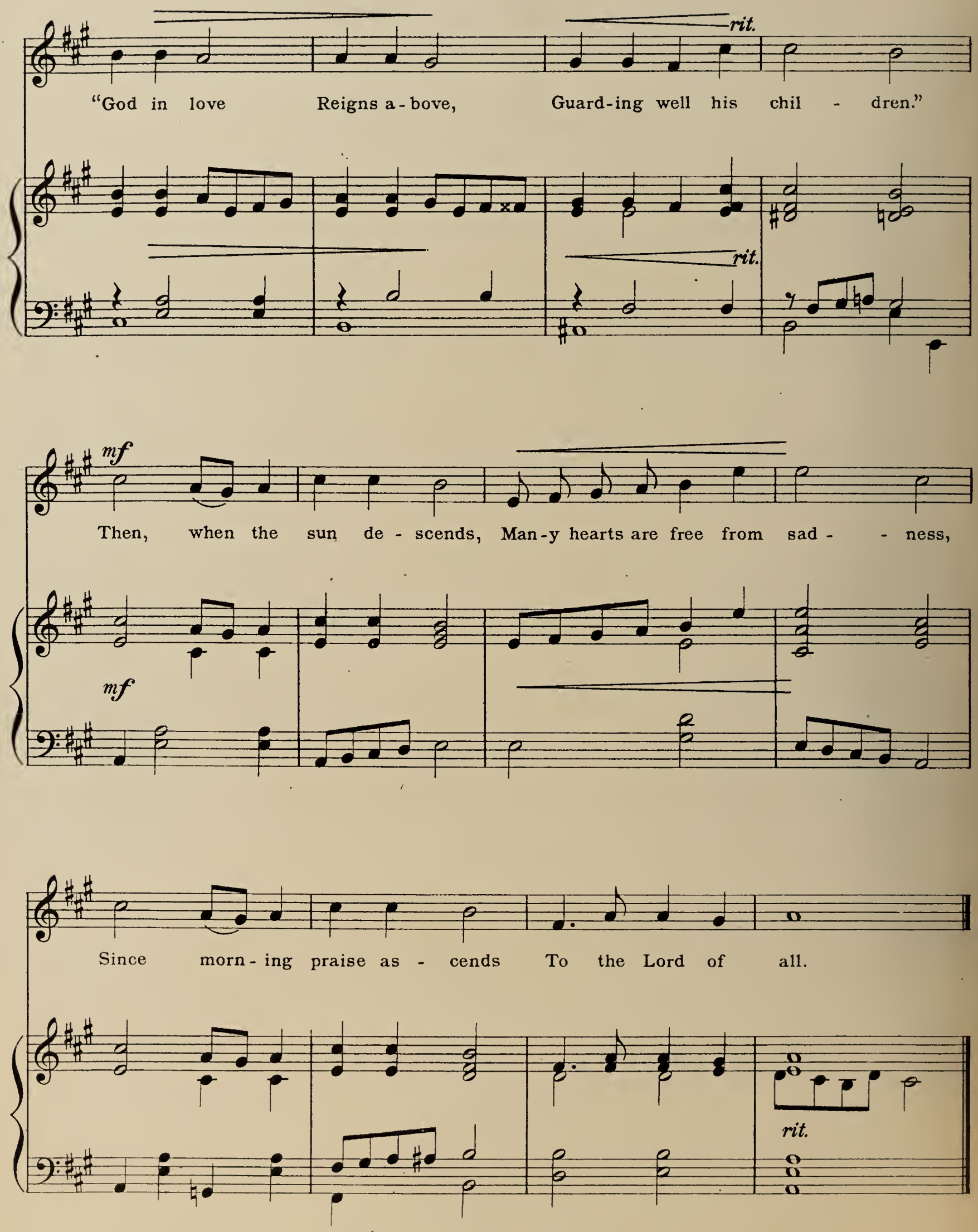
WHITE-CROWNED SPARROW

This beautiful melody greeted my ear on the tenth of last May, as I was hurrying across our campus. The melody was so clear and the intervals so distinct that I at once committed it to paper before I had identified the singer. I soon obtained a fairly good view of him, but was not absolutely certain that it was a White-crowned Sparrow until I had compared the melody with those reported by Mr. Mathews. Here I found his clearly stated principle strikingly illustrated; namely, that each species sings with its own characteristic rhythm. The intervals sung by my bird were quite different from those heard by Mr. Mathews, but the rhythm was the same. This principle must not be applied too literally, however, as there are many exceptions. The bird in question, for instance, has been known to sing melodies with very different rhythms from the one which I heard, but the general tendency, I believe, is as stated.

The spirit of the song which I heard seemed so clearly to suggest devotion, that this morning hymn of praise was the logical result.

White-crowned Sparrow



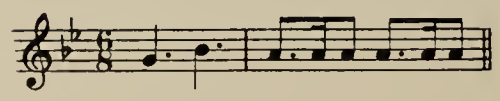

rit.
"God in love Reigns a-bove, Guard-ing well his chil - dren."
rit.
mf
Then, when the sun de - scends, Man-y hearts are free from sad - - ness,
mf
Since morn-ing praise as - cends To the Lord of all.
rit.

WHITE-THROATED SPARROW

To say that a certain bird sings "zwee, zwee-e-e," would not mean much more to one unacquainted with the song, than the words "voi che sapete" would to one who had never heard Mozart's beautiful melody. If, however, the notes commonly sung by the aforesaid bird were to accompany the syllables imitative of the tonal quality, together with suggestions as to tempo, volume of tone, etc., then a fairly good imagination might gain some idea of the sound of the bird's song.

There are some exceptions to this statement, however. If you were told that one bird sings "Bob White," and another "Whip-poor-Will," the chances are you would recognize the bird when you heard him. So also with the White-throated Sparrow. Whether you listen for "Old Sam Peabody, Peabody, Peabody," or "All day whittlin', whittlin', whittlin'," you will know him, for his rhythm is unmistakable. I heard a White-throat one cold morning last October, and his song sounded so disconsolate that I was led to read into it the sentiment appearing in my fancied duet between two birds. Then, too, it struck me that the word "quivering" is as imitative as "Peverly," which is commonly ascribed to him, and "twittering" is as true as "whittlin'." I am certain that the bird is as innocent of one word as the other, and as the words which I have put into his mouth have a coherent meaning, I hope they will find favor.

White-throated Sparrow



All day

p

Leaves are quiv - er-ing, quiv - er-ing,

(♩. = 72)

p

quiv - er-ing, quiv - er-ing, Cold and

Birds are shiv - er-ing, shiv - er- ing,

shiv - er-ing, shiv - er-ing, Aim - less

See them flit - ter-ing, flit - ter-ing, flit - ter-ing,

flit - ter - ing, flit - ter - ing, flit - ter - ing,

Hear them twit - ter - ing, twit - ter - ing,

p

Oh, such twit - ter - ing, twit - ter - ing, twit - ter - ing!

twit - ter - ing.

p

SONG SPARROW

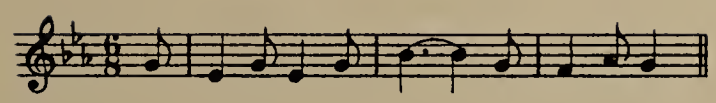
The Song Sparrow—what a wonderful melodist he is! We are just beginning to appreciate his great talent for inventing beautiful melodies. It was but a short time ago that a well-known ornithologist expressed his amazement on learning that a Song Sparrow had been heard to sing seven different variations of a theme. Another writer says: "The song varies greatly with individuals, and almost every writer rènders it differently." True, indeed; but we may go further and say that not only does the song vary with individuals, but each individual bird may have many different songs in his own répertoire; yes, and not only variations of one theme, but many absolutely distinct themes.

Last summer, during a period of fifteen minutes, I heard one bird sing six different songs, of which the second and third might be called variations of the first, while the other three were entirely new thematic material, differing from each other as well as from the first. And an interesting fact is that they were sung in closely related keys—four in F major, one in C major and one in B-flat major. Each song was repeated perhaps a dozen times, separated by short pauses, with practically no change of intervals, until seeming to tire of the one, the bird would start off on another melody.

This custom of repeating is quite characteristic of the bird's singing; in fact, all of the thirty songs which I recorded last summer were delivered in this manner.

The songs I heard were all quite simple, uniformly diatonic, and with definite tonality. No wonder that "almost every writer renders it differently," when we reflect that none of the melodies which I have noted have I seen recorded elsewhere, nor do I remember hearing any of the songs which others have reported.

Song Sparrow



With abandon (♩. = 132)

Up in the bal - sam - tree I love to sing, My

heart is light and free When car - ol - ing. And

when I tire of one song, I sim - ply try an - oth - er, I

know e-nough to last me all day long. And

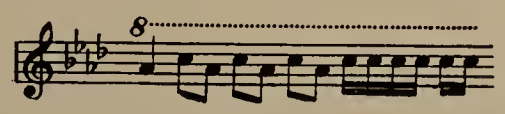
so through-out the day I gai-ly sing, 'Twill

drive your care a-way, And glad-ness bring.

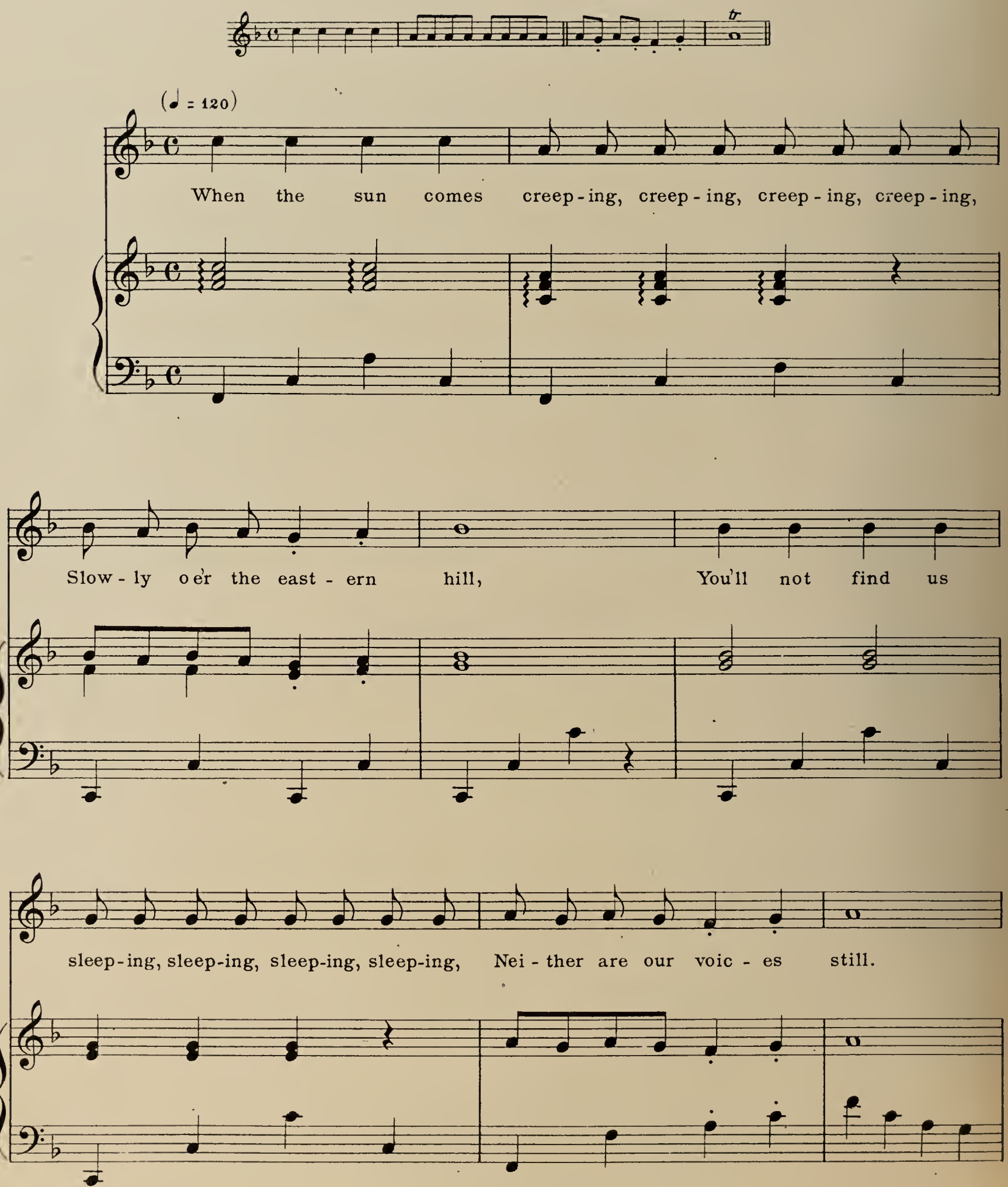
FIELD SPARROW

The songs of this Sparrow are not so interesting from a melodic standpoint as those of the Song Sparrow, nor does he possess such a variety of themes. Still, he has a larger number than most of his tribe, and as for execution, his accelerandos and crescendos are well-nigh perfect. Mr. Chapman says: "His song is in keeping with his character, being an unusually clear, plaintive whistle, sweeter to the lover of birds' songs than the voice of the most gifted songstress." This is a strong statement, but there certainly is something very appealing in the sweet tones of the simple little melody which floats across the field in the heat of midday, or, later, adds to the spirit of peace which comes with the lengthening shadows.

The first of the two themes which I have used was recorded by Mr. Oldys; the second I heard in a field near Frankfort, Mich. While they are both interesting themes, they are, perhaps, rather unusual, the more common form being somewhat like the following:



Field Sparrow



Ea - ger watch we're keep - ing, keep - ing, keep - ing, keep - ing,

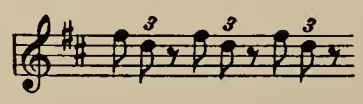
Read - y for the sun to rise, Na - ture then re - joic - es,

E - lo - quent her voic - es, Bid - ding you to ope your eyes.

BLACK-BILLED CUCKOO

Shortly after sunset one evening, as I was walking through a pasture containing much second growth of maple, beech, and fir, I was brought up short by a most interesting succession of sounds coming from a dense thicket quite near me. "Coo-coo-coo, coo-coo-coo, coo-coo-coo" were the sounds, given in perfect rhythmic succession, on one pitch, and with a quality of tone which produced a very tranquil, peaceful effect. There could be no doubt as to the identity of the singer.

But this is not the limit of his ability. On another occasion, I was startled by an ejaculation from the bushes directly ahead of me: "Oo-wock-oo!" At least, so I understood it, and was further amazed to see the ejaculator, a Black-billed Cuckoo, fly out and off, away from my sight. Then, as I still stood at attention, I was the object of still further remarks from a tree not very far away: "Cowlp, cowlp, cowlp!" This was exceedingly interesting to me, for while he did not sing the word "cuckoo," yet the tones were exactly those attributed to his European cousin:



The tones were sharp and clear, and the interval exact. If he can sing "Cuckoo," or "Coo-coo-coo," on one pitch, and "Cowlp," using two tones, it is but reasonable to suppose that he does sometimes actually sing "Cuckoo" on the two tones, as does the European Cuckoo. In fact, Mr. Cheney heard him do so, though the interval sung was a perfect fourth.

Black-billed Cuckoo

etc. etc.

(♩. = 92)

Cuck-oo - koo, cuck-oo - koo, cuck-oo - koo, cuck-oo -

koo, oo - wock-oo! oo - wock-oo! Cuck-oo -

Ped. ✻ Ped. ✻

koo, cuck-oo - koo, cuck-oo - koo, cuck-oo - koo.

Cuck-oo, cuck-oo, cuck-oo, cuck-oo, In deep-est thick-et a - bid - ing,

Fine

Cuck-oo, cuck-oo, cuck-oo, cuck-oo, I'm sing-ing your song to you.

Fine

Cuck-oo, cuck-oo, cuck-oo, cuck-oo, I won-der where you're hid-ing,

Cuck-oo, cuck-oo, cuck-oo, cuck-oo, I've searched the wood-land thro'. Cuck-oo-

D.S.

koo, cuck-oo-koo, cuck-oo-koo, cuck-oo-koo!

D.S.

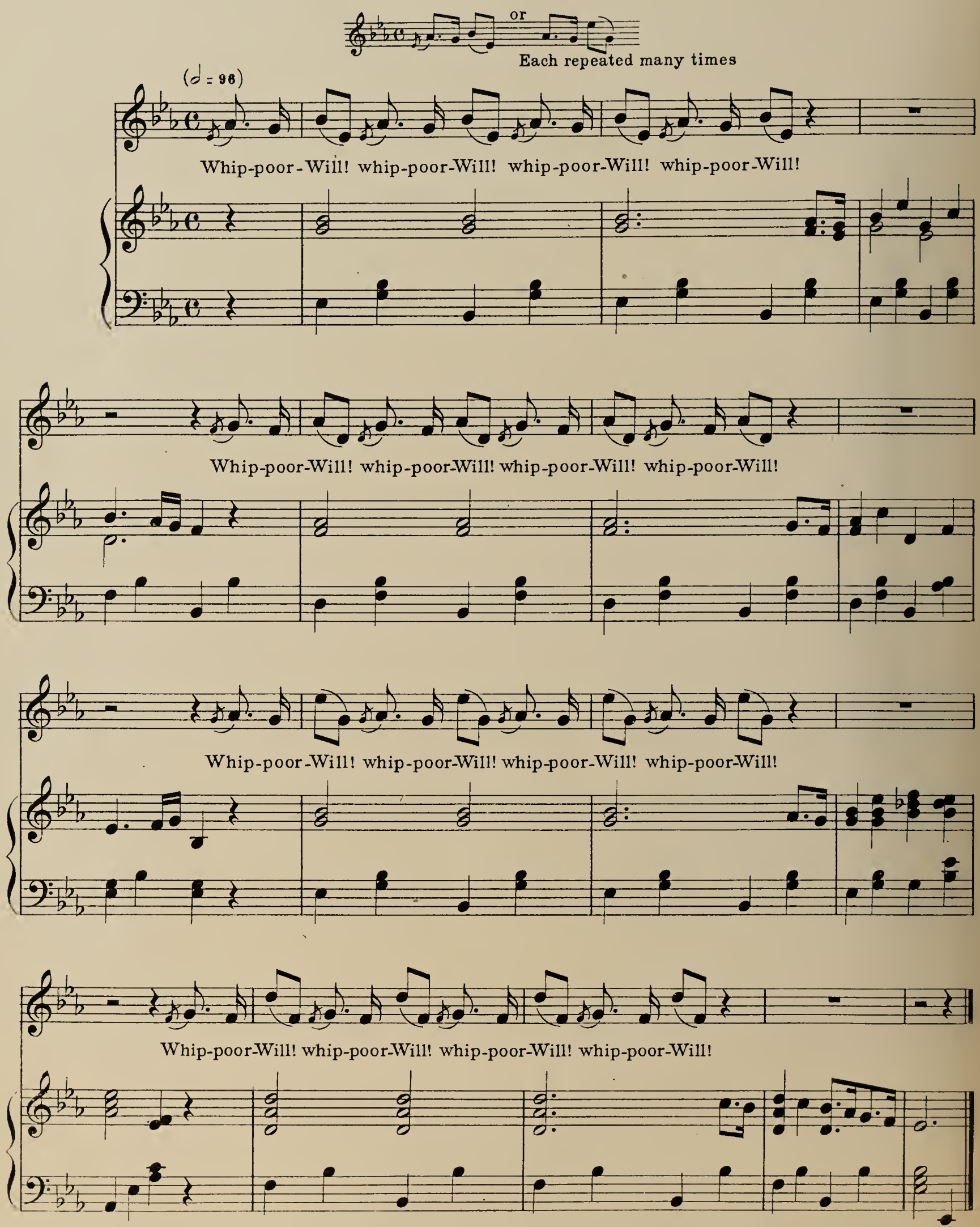
WHIP-POOR-WILL

Who has not heard this eerie call from across the lake, or from somewhere in the woods on a summer evening? And indeed, it may be heard at any time during the night, until it is drowned in the chorus of those who greet the dawn.

The intervals of the call vary different with individuals, and the same bird may vary his own theme at different times, but the rhythm is quite constant.

The best effect will be produced in this song by whistling the melody, at the same time trying to form the words "Whip-poor-Will" with the lips and tongue. There is also a slight chuckling sound just before each "whip," represented here by the grace-note.

Whip-poor-Will



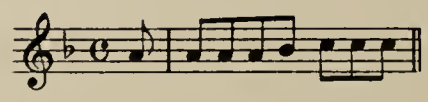
BLACK-POLL WARBLER

One day I ran across a flock of these tiny birds, whose faint, high-pitched voices seemed continually to be saying: "What would you, would you see, see, see?" So I constructed this little song, with that question as a starting-point, and the melody to which the words were sung as the musical theme.

Some little friends of mine who have learned the song, call it the song of the "see-see" bird.

Sometimes the song was varied by the insertion of the chromatic tone, B natural, in the upward progression; but, as a rule, the melody was diatonic. I am aware, however, that this melody is rather exceptional, for the Black-poll more commonly sings a monotone.

Black-poll Warbler*



Daintily (♩= 108)

mf

(*Bird*) "What would you, would you see, see, see, That you should stare at me? I'm

mf

work - ing far too bus - i - ly To in - ter - rup - ted be." (*Child*) "I

mf

wish to see your ti - ny nest, Your eggs of brown and white, Or

mf

* If desired, this song may be sung by two voices or two groups of singers, one singing the part of the Bird, the other that of the Child.

if you have some bird - ies, That would be a pret - ty sight." *(Bird)* "If

that is what you'd see, see, see, I can - not show the tree; My

bird - ies they would fright - ened be, But you may look at me."

rit.

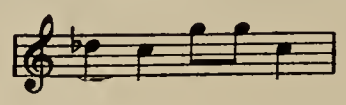
rit.

BLACK-THROATED GREEN WARBLER

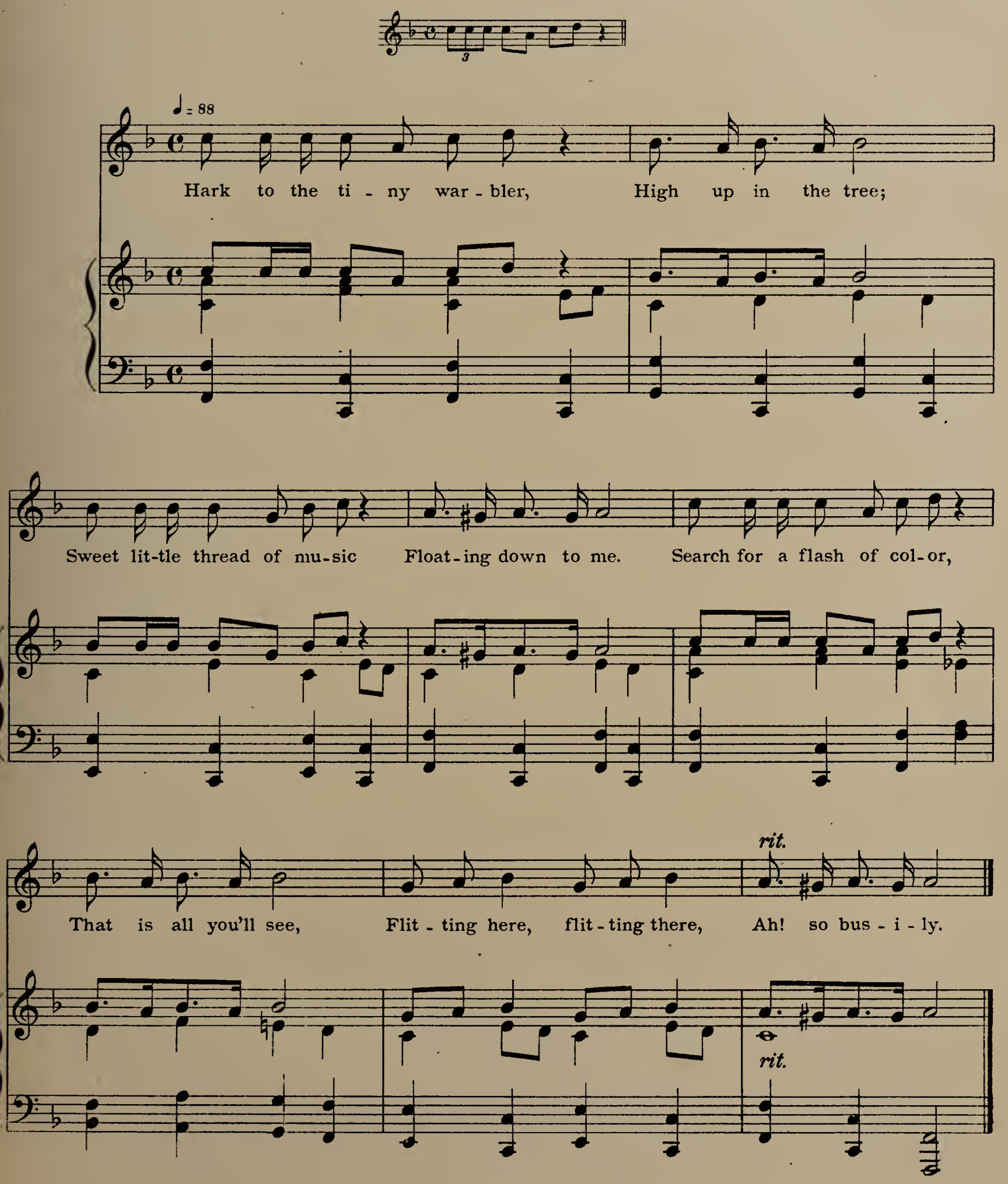
This Warbler is accounted to be the finest singer of his family. The melody which I have used is not the invariable form of this song, as he is quite as apt to use other tones for the close. I have heard the same bird vary the song by adding B-flat between C and A.

The tone-quality is light and thin, but given in such a leisurely style that the effect is most pleasing.

Another song, quite different from the one quoted, which is frequently heard from this bird, runs as follows:



Black-throated Green Warbler



BLACK-THROATED BLUE WARBLER

There may be some who will consider it foolish to ascribe any musical value to so simple and seemingly barren a theme as this. But we need only remind such that from just such simple thematic material as that sung by the thin, wiry little voice of the Black-throated Blue Warbler, some of the world's greatest masterpieces have been evolved.

I grant that the song which I have written is an absolutely simple song, but how could one, in sincerity, write an elaborate song with this tiny bird as the subject?

It seems to me, moreover, that it is high time that musicians were cognizant and appreciative of the wealth of melody daily poured forth by these feathered friends of ours.

Black-throated Blue Warbler

(♩ = 100)

p

In yon-der lit-tle tree, Where few would ev-er see,

mf *mf*

A bird is on her nest, Three

mf *p* *mf*

eggs be-neath her breast. But do not lin-ger near,

p

mf *p*

You'll fright-en her, I fear.

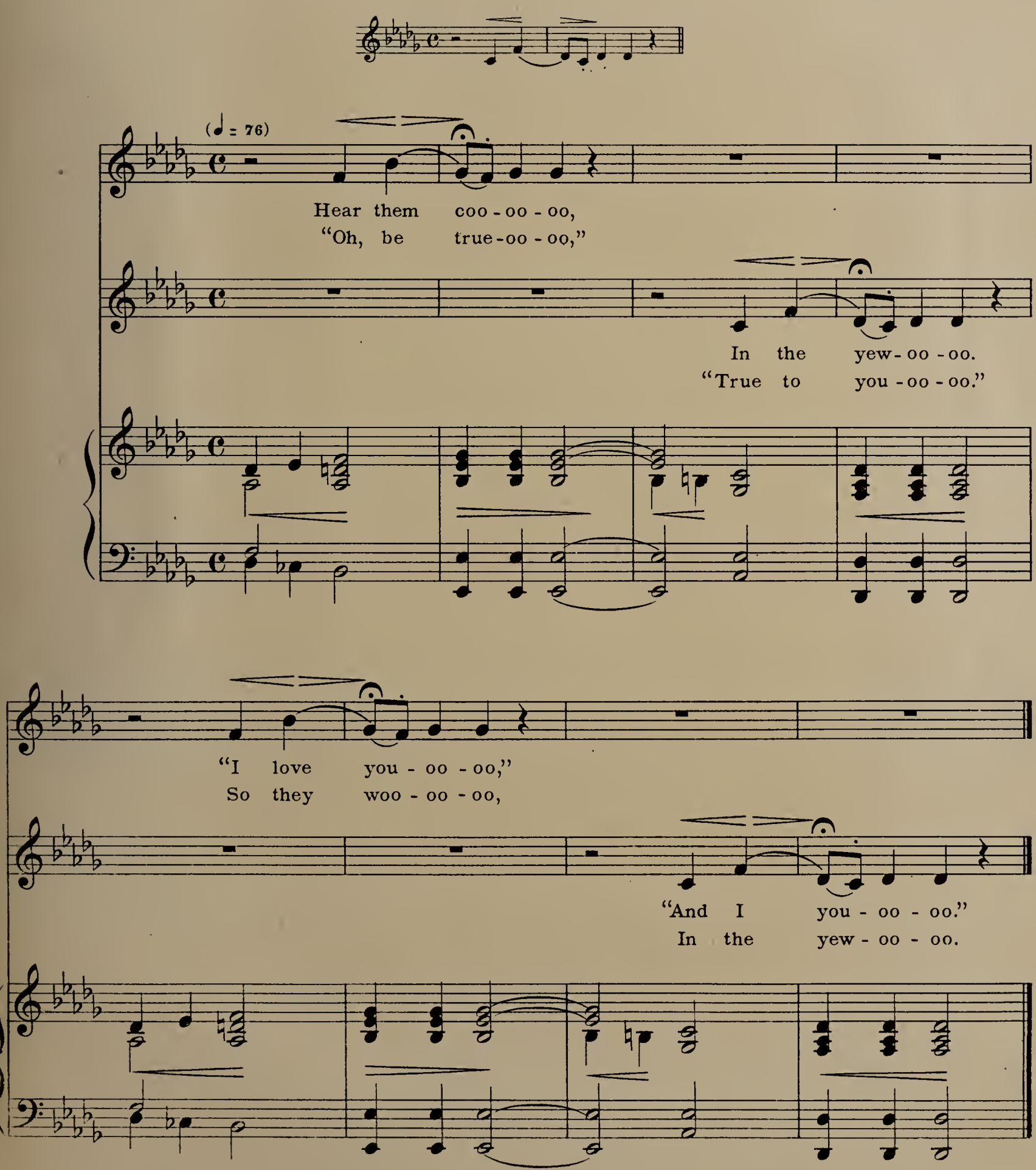
p *rit.*

MOURNING DOVE

The melody which I have here used, I heard sung in exactly this pitch and with the intervals quite true, though the *portamento* was freely used as indicated. Rather low in pitch for a bird, you say? Yes, but that is one thing which gives the song its mournful, pathetic character.

Do we not commonly think of a voice of contralto quality as more expressive of sympathy or other tender emotions than a high soprano voice? The bird is well named.

Mourning Dove*



* This song may be sung by one voice

BOB-WHITE, OR QUAIL

When I was a small boy, it was a common fancy with us children to consider the calls of the Quail as the pronouncements of an infallible weather-prophet. Sometimes he said, "More wet!" Well, then it would surely rain. Again it might be, "No more wet!" and, though it were raining at the time, he doubtless meant that it would clear off soon. So I have used these phrases in the song.

These are not the only intervals which he uses. Sometimes the jump is a fifth, again a sixth, or even a seventh, but he does not seem to vary his style; it is always the same cheery, ringing call. The intervals I have used are those which were sung by the bird whose tones I happened to record. The rest of the melody is, of course, entirely my own invention.

Bob-white, or Quail

(♩ = 66)

f *f* r.h. *p* r.h. *p* *accel. e cresc.*

(♩. = ♩)

1. "Pray, can you tell what the weath - er will be,
2. "How can you tell what the weath - er will be,

Bob - white? Wise weath - er pro-phet, O what do you see,
Bob - white? What is your sys-tem, O tell it to me,

r. h. *p*

Bob - Bob - white?" "All in - di - ca - tions would
Bob - Bob - white?" "That is a se - cret I

seem — to say: 'More wet!' I
can - not im - part: More wet! Just

r. h.
p

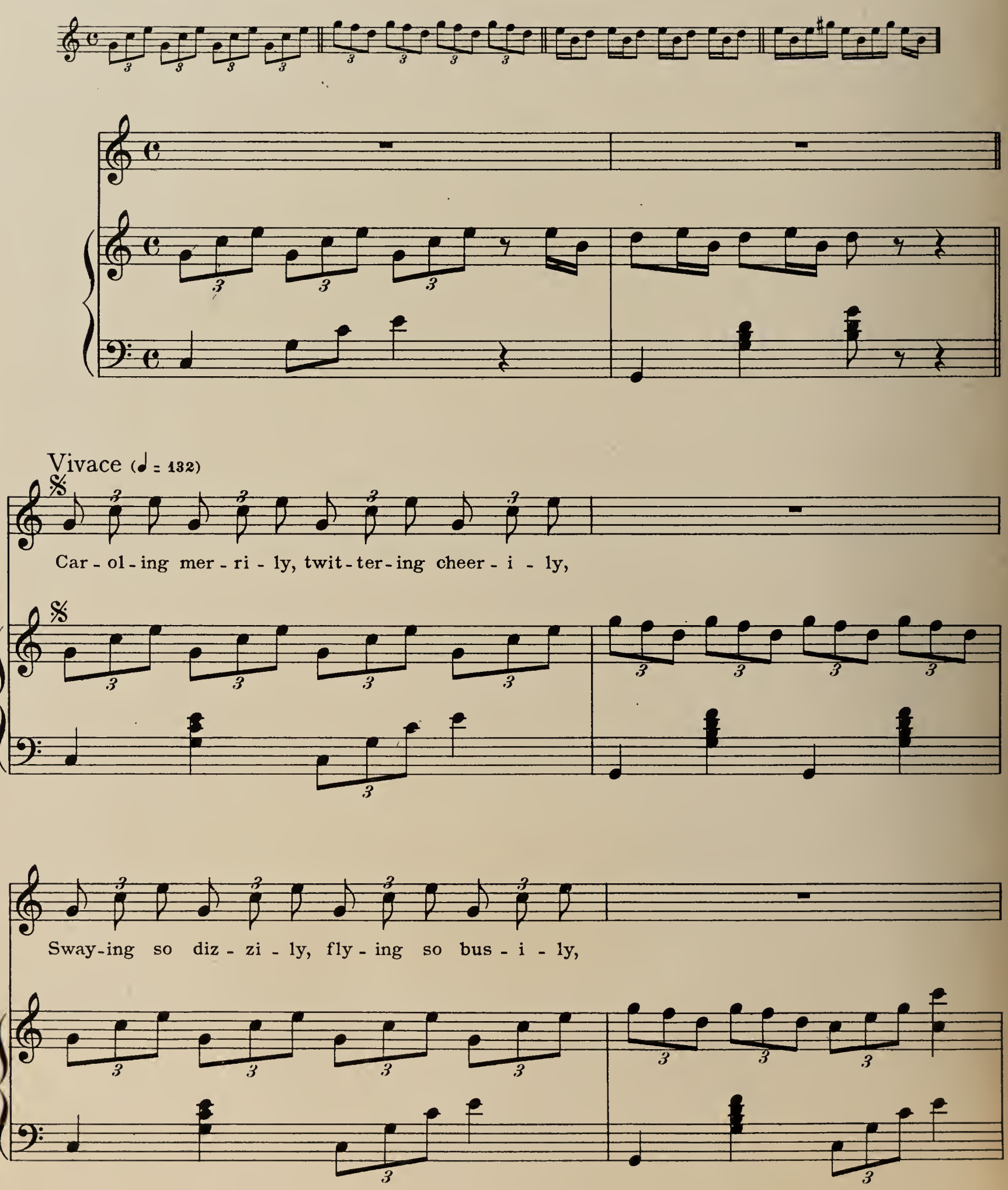
feel that a show - er is on — the way, So more wet!"
list to my sig - nals and learn them by heart— No more wet!"

CAROLINA WREN

Mr. Henry Oldys, to whom I am indebted for these themes, has written of this bird as follows: "First acquaintance with the Carolina Wren is always a surprisc. Almost as small as his well-known cousin, the House Wren, he seems scarcely capable of having breath enough in his little body to produce the clear, ringing notes that startle the neighboring echoes."

A letter from Mr. Isaac E. Hess, who has contributed so much to the appreciation of birds on the part of residents in central Illinois, refers thus to his song: "Have you heard the Carolina Wren? There is a note that can be placed immediately in the scale. The song to which I refer (he has several), begins with high DO, then drops to SOL, then on to lower DO, a pure octave, repeating the DO-SOL-DO three times in succession." While I have not used this theme, it will be seen to differ but little from one which I have used.

Carolina Wren



Up in the ap - ple-tree some one is call - ing me,

I must be hur - ry - ing, she will be wor - ry - ing,

Car - ol - ing mer - ri - ly, twit - ter - ing cheer - i - ly,

Sway-ing so diz - zi - ly, fly - ing so bus - i - ly,

Fine

Fine

(♩ = 116)

Here a - way, there a-way, till the close of the day, You may

see me at work, tho' you think it is play. If you

wan - der a-gain in the wood or the glen You will

sure - ly re-mem - ber the song of the Wren. Here a -

way, there a - way, till the close of the day, You may

see me at work, tho' you think it is play.

D. S.

D. S.

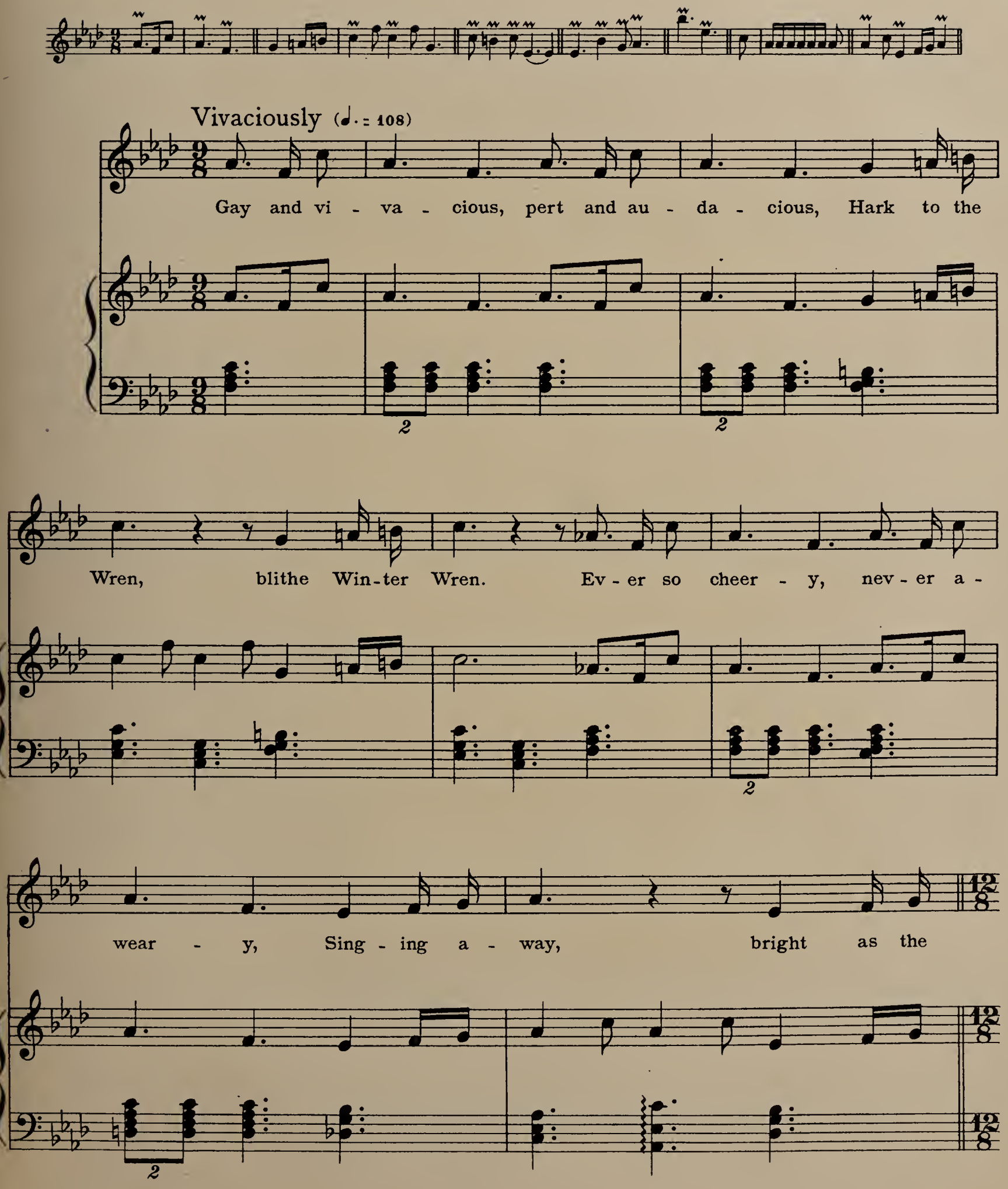
WINTER WREN

Have you ever heard the Winter Wren? No? Then you have missed one of the merriest, cheeriest, most effervescent songs to be heard in all of nature's great chorus. A pair of them made their home in a hollow tree not thirty feet from my cottage in the woods, and from June 22d, when I first heard them, until the middle of July, their spirits were unquenchable.

Mr. Bradford Torrey, in his interesting book, "Birds in the Bush," says: "The great distinction of the Winter Wren's melody is its marked rhythm and accent." Yes, and the fact that nearly every tone is either trilled or repeated so rapidly that it reminds one of a bubbling fountain. Yet his intervals are quite clear, and his tonality, as a rule, is distinct. He has the habit of repeating his melodies as does the Song Sparrow, though with the repetitions the intervals will occasionally vary slightly. In other words, he may flat some tone until the melody is finally twisted into another key.

As may be judged from a study of the themes which I have used, his song may take several different forms. Many other records I have from the same singer, some of them new themes, and others fragments or distortions of these.

Winter Wren


Vivaciously (♩. = 108)
Gay and vi - va - cious, pert and au - da - cious, Hark to the
Wren, blithe Win-ter Wren. Ev - er so cheer - y, nev - er a -
wear - y, Sing - ing a - way, bright as the

Quietly (♩. = 96)

day. In yon-der tree, the hol-low tree, Quite safe from

you and me, They built a nest, where none mo-

lest, And there his mate sits pa-tient-ly.

Tempo I°

So with his sing - ing joy - ous - ly ring - ing, Pass - es the

day swift - ly a - way. She is not wear - y, hear - ing his

cheer - y "Tra la la la la la - e - o. Tra la la la la la - e - o."

BOBOLINK

As one morning I went for water to the well hidden in the trees just above a small open meadow, I was greeted from below by a remarkable melody, given in clear flute-like tones which caused me to stop in amazement. "Hello!" said I, "who is whistling Schumann?" Further investigation revealed the white cap and the black breast of the Bobolink, who was thus unconsciously though unmistakably singing a part of the well-known theme from the "Faschingsschwank." And not once but for several days, I heard the same song, sometimes just as quoted, sometimes curtailed, or, again, followed by a rapid fire of tones which I believe no human ear could disentangle. I tried many times, but always gave up in despair. Shortly afterward, however, with the influx of summer residents, and the frequenting of his domain by wild-strawberry seekers, he departed to fields unknown.

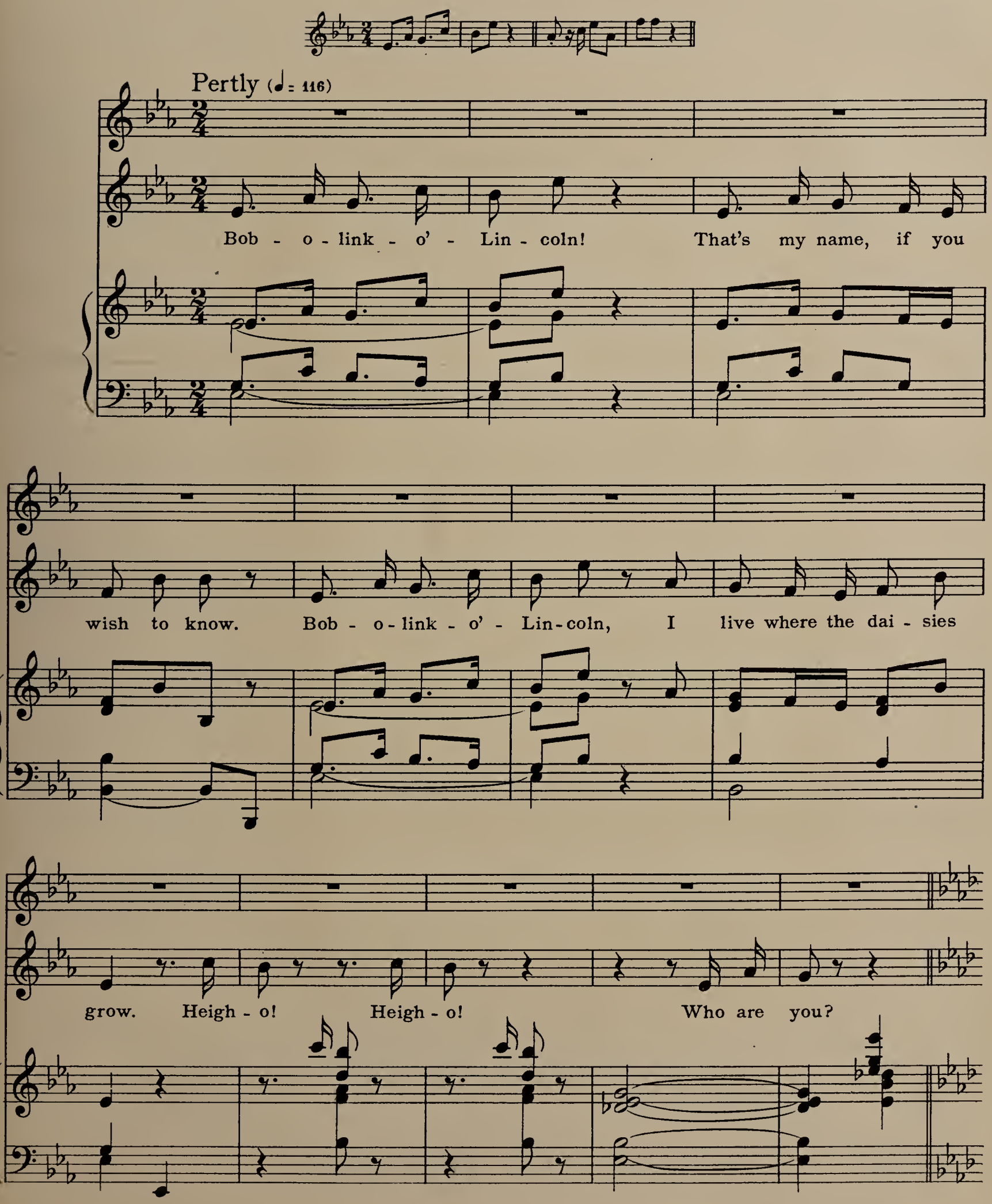
Another Bobolink, which lived in a meadow about a quarter of a mile distant, sang in the same style, but with a theme consisting of an exact major triad, with the third and fifth preceded by a short tone on the fourth and sixth respectively.

Both of these main themes were always sung in a clear, precise manner, never hurried—such as any whistling boy might easily imitate.

Since the first theme which I heard was so strikingly like that of Schumann's though the bird sang in C major, I have taken the liberty of using the first part of the Schumann composition in its exact, original form. In my song, this theme appears second.

Bobolink

Adapted from Robert Schumann



Bob - o-link - o' - Lin-coln. Bob - o-link - o' -

r. h.

Lin-coln. Bob - o'-Lin-coln,

Bob - o'-Lin-coln,

r. h.

Bob - o' - Lin-coln, Bob - o'-Lin-coln,

Bob - o-link - o' - Lin-coln, Bob - o'-Lin-coln,

Bob - o' - Lin - coln, Bob - o - link - o' - Lin - coln,

Bob - o - link - o' - Lin - coln,

Bob - o - link - o' - Lin - coln,

Bob - o - link - o' - Lin - coln, Bob - o - link - o -

Bob - o - link - o - link, Bob - o - link.

link, Bob - o - link.

dim.

l. h.
pp

A WOODLAND MEDLEY

This song was written expressly for the Hughey Color-Music School. In this school, children are taught to associate each tone of the scale with a certain color, and, to add interest, birds of the proper color are shown in picture and treated in story. To bring this phase of the subject from the imaginary to the real, I have selected birds of the proper color, which sing songs accentuating the tone represented by the color. All of the notes of the melody of this song are the actual bird notes.

The colors assigned to the various notes of the scale, and the bird chosen for each, are as follows:

Do,	red,	Cardinal.
Re,	orange,	Baltimore Oriole.
Mi,	yellow,	Yellow-breasted Chat.
Fa,	green,	Red-eyed Vireo.
Sol,	blue,	Blue Jay.
La,	violet,	Linnet, or Purple Finch.
Ti,	pink,	Rose-breasted Grosbeak.
Do,	light red,	Cardinal.

A Woodland Medley

Allegro (♩ = 132)

Oh, what cheer! Red-bird's here, Bal-ti-more O-ri-ole too.

Mer-ri-ly from the bush-es sings the Yel-low-breast-ed Chat,

Vir-e-o, mer-ry O, Blue Jay far a-way,

Lin-net is war-bling his mer-ry roun-de-lay, High in the tree-top car-ols a Gros-beak,

Pret-ty, pret-ty, pret-ty, pret-ty, pret-ty, pret-ty, pret-ty, pret-ty crea-tures.

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